C.9 Recreation and Land Use

This section describes the impacts to land use and public recreation associated with the construction and operation of the proposed action and alternatives. The EIS/EIR considers existing and proposed land uses in addition to sensitive land uses that have the potential to be affected by the Project. Sensitive land uses include the following land use types: residences, schools, hospitals, daycare centers, retirement homes, and cemeteries. Recreational resources are also defined as sensitive land uses, as they are susceptible to disturbances (e.g., noise, traffic, dust, etc.) that could decrease or eliminate the value of the recreational experience. In general, recreational facilities (parks, open space, playgrounds, play fields, etc.), recreational activities (bicycling, hiking, boating, etc.), and recreationists are considered to be sensitive receptors for purposes of this impact assessment.

C.9.1 Affected Environment

The proposed sediment removal at Littlerock Reservoir would be located within the Santa Clara/Mojave Rivers Ranger District of the Angeles National Forest (ANF). Truck routes for construction equipment and sediment removal would traverse federal and local jurisdictions that include National Forest System (NFS) lands, unincorporated Los Angeles County, and City of Palmdale (see Figure C.9-1: Jurisdictional Boundaries). The extent of the area to be analyzed for land use impacts is considered the Land Use Study Area. While other issue areas in this EIS/EIR may identify a Study Area with a different radius, the Land Use Study Area has been defined by the following:

- Land and recreation uses immediately adjacent to construction activities at Littlerock Reservoir;
- Land and recreation uses located along the sediment removal truck routes; and
- Land and recreation uses adjacent to the proposed sediment disposal sites.

To facilitate the analysis of land use and public recreation for the proposed action and alternatives, the discussion of the affected environment within the Study Area has been organized by NFS lands, truck routes, and proposed sediment disposal sites.

C.9.1.1 National Forest System Lands

The Land Management Plan (Forest Plan) for the ANF divides NFS lands into Land Use Zones, which identify appropriate management types of uses that are consistent with the desired conditions of each Place within the Forest. The Project occurs within the Backcountry[1] and Developed Area Interface[2] zones. These zones allow a variety of uses and are the two least restrictive zones described in the Forest Plan.

Figure C.9-2 (Angeles National Forest Land Use Zones) illustrates the location of the Forest Service Land Use Zones relative to the Project components. The majority of the Reservoir and the existing paved areas are located within the Developed Area Interface Land Use Zone. However, the proposed grade control structure at Rocky Point is located within the Back Country Land Use Zone.

The Littlerock Dam and Reservoir are authorized on NFS lands by a special use authorization, considered a non-recreation special-use. Although the dam and the water behind it are owned and managed by PWD,

[1] Generally undeveloped; includes network of Back Country roads that provide access for camping, hiking, biking, and OHV use.

[2] Adjacent to communities and developed sites; includes developed recreation facilities and infrastructure.

its operations are subject to a special-use authorization that is administered by the Forest Service (USFS, 2005b).

San Gabriel Mountains National Monument. On October 10, 2014, the San Gabriel Mountains National Monument was established under the President's Antiquities Act authority. The portion of the Study Area that is located on NFS lands is entirely within this National Monument.

Littlerock Reservoir Recreation Facilities. While the primary purpose of Littlerock Dam is to provide a water source to PWD, recreation facilities have been developed at the Reservoir and the surrounding area. Many of these facilities were built pursuant to PWD's agreements with DWR and the Forest Service (USFS, 2014a). These facilities include:

- Little Rock Lake Resort: Includes a general store, cafe, and boat and cabin rentals (USFS, 2014a).
- Picnic Sites: The Juniper Picnic Site, Rocky Point Picnic Site, Fisherman's Point, and Sage Picnic Site are located adjacent to the Reservoir, while the Santiago Staging Area Picnic Site is located 0.25 mile south of the Reservoir.
- Joshua Tree and Basin Campgrounds located approximately one mile south of the dam.
- OHV roads and trails located east and south of the Reservoir (currently closed at the Reservoir due to the presence of endangered species), and OHV use of the Reservoir (when water levels are lowered by PWD) between the dam and Rocky Point.

Historically, Littlerock Reservoir and the surrounding area have provided a diversity of recreational uses and opportunities. The 1997 Recreation Area Guidelines adopted by the Forest Service estimated a design capacity of 489 vehicles, or 1,252 people at one time in the developed recreation area.

There is currently little to no recreational use or potential at Littlerock Reservoir, and a number of factors have contributed to the area's current state. Impacts to Arroyo Toads required closure of Forest Road 5N04 and the campgrounds south of the Reservoir. The ongoing drought has caused PWD to virtually empty the Reservoir as early as April, leaving no "minimum pool" for water-based recreation. In non-drought years the minimum pool is maintained until Labor Day. Declining budgets and fee revenue to the Forest Service have substantially reduced available enforcement personnel and facility maintenance funds. The threat of Quagga mussels has caused the Forest Service to limit boating activities in 2011. The Forest Service has the option to permit a concessionaire to operate the resort facilities, but due to limited economic potential, no permit has been offered since the last one expired in 2013. The State of California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) no longer stocks trout due to a lawsuit over endangered species impacts, and the California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment has issued a fish consumption advisory due to presence of mercury in fish tissues (LRWQCB, 2014), both limiting a once popular angling destination. One of the recreational opportunities historically available is OHV use within the Reservoir, which was last authorized in 2013. The Forest Service annually assesses OHV use at the Reservoir based on weather and water levels, and therefore it is not consistently available as an OHV area. In some years, OHV use is permitted within the Reservoir for one to two months beginning in September. In other years, the Reservoir has not been lowered to a sufficient degree to allow for OHV use. The Reservoir is currently closed to public access to protect public health and safety, but no official Forest Service Closure Order has been issued. This means the entry gate is closed and locked, but it is not illegal to enter the area.

Current management of recreation at the Reservoir faces challenges such as drought and ongoing closure to OHV use. In determining potential future recreational use, the Forest Plan specifies that existing facilities and recreational opportunities would either be maintained or would be the subject of site-

specific analysis to determine future management. It is reasonably foreseeable that the Forest Service would undertake a project to restore the recreational use and opportunities at Littlerock Reservoir over the life of the Project.

Alternative Recreation Facilities. The following recreational resources are located within 35 miles of the Reservoir, and include facilities for boating, fishing, swimming, camping, hiking, and OHV use.

- **Chilao Campground-** Approximately 11 miles south of Littlerock Reservoir, this campground is located within the ANF and includes 84 campsites (USFS, 2016).
- **Soledad Canyon RV and Camping Resort-** Approximately 11 miles southwest of Littlerock Reservoir, this facility offers camping, swimming, sports courts, bike trails, and a miniature golf course (Thousand Trails, 2016).
- **Acton/ Los Angeles North KOA-** Approximately 14 miles southwest of Littlerock Reservoir, this facility offers camping, swimming, and sports courts (KOA, 2016).
- **Rowher Flat OHV Recreation Area-** Approximately 20 miles west of Littlerock Reservoir, this 10,000-acre recreation area is managed by the Forest Service and is open year-round. It includes 60-miles of trails and areas for camping (USFS, 2011; RiderPlanet, 2015).
- **El Mirage Dry Lake Off-Highway Vehicle Recreation Area-** Approximately 28 miles northeast of Littlerock Reservoir, this recreation area is managed by the Bureau of Land Management and is open year-round. It includes 40 miles of OHV trails as well as areas for camping. Other recreational activities include hiking, rock scrambling, rock hounding and the use of ultra-light aircraft (BLM, 2016).
- **Castaic Lake Recreation Area-** Approximately 33 miles west of Littlerock Reservoir, this recreation area is operated by the County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation. Facilities include camping, fishing, boating, swimming, and hiking (Castaic Lake, 2016).

C.9.1.2 Truck Routes

The truck routes for transporting excavated sediment would utilize existing roadways along areas characterized by undeveloped land with scattered low-density residential uses. The exact truck route would depend upon the selected sediment storage or disposal site, which would include one of the following:

- **PWD-owned property route:** To access this site, trucks would travel along Cheseboro Road, Barrel Springs Road, and 47th Street. The first approximately 1.6 miles of the route along Cheseboro Road would traverse NFS lands, while the remainder 2.7 miles would be entirely within unincorporated Los Angeles County (see Figure C.9-1: Jurisdictional Boundaries). The area along this route is predominately undeveloped with a scattering of ranch-style homes. The route would cross the California Aqueduct, which is located along the southern border of this site. Water storage tanks are located along 47th Street immediately south of the aqueduct.
- **Existing quarries route:** To access the quarries, trucks would travel along Cheseboro Road and Avenue T. The first approximately 1.6 miles of the route along Cheseboro Road would traverse NFS lands, with approximately three miles across unincorporated Los Angeles County and approximately 0.6 mile across the City of Palmdale (see Figure C.9-3: Land Use Designations). The land uses along this route include scattered residences separated by large areas of undeveloped land. Residential development along Cheseboro Road is primarily located north of the California Aqueduct and south of Avenue T.

C.9.1.3 Proposed Sediment Disposal Sites

The Project would temporarily store or dispose of excavated sediment at one of two possible locations. The location of these sites and their adjacent land uses are discussed below:

- **PWD property:** This 21-acre undeveloped site is located in unincorporated Los Angeles County in an area zoned for single-family residential development (see Figure C.9-3). The property is bordered to the east and west by residential development, to the south by the California Aqueduct, and to the north by undeveloped land.
- **Existing quarries:** There are six sand and gravel pits that are located north and east of Pearblossom Highway and south and east of E Avenue S. The quarries are located in an area of the City of Palmdale that is zoned for Quarry and Reclamation Use (see Figure C.9-3: Land Use Designations).

C.9.2 Regulatory Framework

The Project and alternatives would traverse federal and local jurisdictions. The following discussion summarizes the associated laws, regulations, and standards for these jurisdictions. Table C.9-1 provides a list of standards from the Forest Service Land Management Plan, as well as local policies that are applicable to Recreation and Land Use, and includes a discussion of the Project's consistency with each policy.

C.9.2.1 USDA Forest Service

- **National Forest Management Act (NFMA).** This law requires that any site-specific project that is proposed within a national forest must be consistent with Forest Plan Standards in Part 3 of the Forest Plan. While not required by NFMA, the Project is also consistent with Forest Plan program strategies for Special Use Administration, Watershed Function, and Air Quality, and will help accomplish the Desired Conditions for Natural Areas in an Urban Context by using and restoring an existing facility instead of constructing a new one. The Project also occurs within Land Use Zones suitable for these projects and activities as discussed in Section C.9.1.1.

C.9.2.2 County of Los Angeles

- **County of Los Angeles General Plan Land Use Element (Adopted November 1980).** The County of Los Angeles is currently updating its General Plan. Although the 1980 General Plan (as amended) continues to be the official planning document for the County, the proposed 2035 General Plan was also reviewed in this Recreation and Land Use analysis to identify any policies that may be specific to the Project. At this time, there were no policies proposed in the 2035 General Plan for which the Project would be inconsistent.

  The Project would traverse the following County land use classifications: Non-Urban, Open Space, and Low Density Residential (County of Los Angeles, 1980). As described in Section C.9.1 (Affected Environment), the proposed sediment storage site on 47th Street East is zoned for single-family residential development. Per Title 22 of the County of Los Angeles' Planning and Zoning Code (Section 22.20.100), a Single-Family Residence Zone may accommodate solid fill projects (i.e., more than 1,000 cubic yards) as long as a conditional use permit (CUP) has been obtained by the County (County of Los Angeles, 2014b).

- **Antelope Valley Areawide General Plan (Adopted December 1986).** This areawide plan is a component of the County of Los Angeles General Plan and guides the County's planning efforts for the unincorporated portions of Antelope Valley. The nearest unincorporated rural community to the

Project is the community of Littlerock, which is less than one mile east of the existing quarries. The proposed truck routes for sediment disposal would not travel within the Littlerock community. Per the Antelope Valley Areawide General Plan, the Project would traverse lands classified as "Non Urban," which includes low-density residential, airports, waste disposal facilities, mining operations, and quarries (County of Los Angeles, 1986).

C.9.2.3 City of Palmdale

- **City of Palmdale General Plan (January 1993).** The Land Use Element of the City of Palmdale General Plan provides an overview of existing land uses within the City, which includes six sand and gravel mining operations located along the Little Rock Wash on the southeastern border, as well as one mining operation located on the west side of the City at 70th Street West, south of the California Aqueduct (City of Palmdale, 1993). The Project would consider disposing the excavated sediment at the exhausted mining quarries located within the City along its southeastern border. The quarries are located in an area that is currently zoned for Quarry and Reclamation Use. Any quarry operator who participates with the PWD to receive sediment from the Reservoir must apply to the City for a new CUP or for a major modification to its existing CUP, per the discretion of the City.

Table C.9-1. Consistency with Applicable Recreation and Land Use Plans and Policies

Plan/Policy	Consistency	Explanation
USDA Forest Service Land Management Plan Part 3: Design Criteria for the Southern California National Forests (September 2005)		
The following Land Management Plan Standards are applicable to the Project: • *S9/S10 - Design management activities to meet the Scenic Integrity Objectives shown on the Scenic Integrity Objectives Map* • *S11/S12 – Develop specific conservation measures for TEPCS species using Forest Plan species documents and Appendices* • *S14/S15 – Retention of snags and downed logs in and outside of RCAs* • *S18 - Protect known active and inactive raptor nest areas. When appropriate, a no-disturbance buffer around active nest sites will be required from nest-site selection to fledging.* • *S24 – Mitigate ongoing uses on ESA listed species* • *S31 – Design new facilities to direct public use away from ESA listed, proposed or candidate species* • *S32 - When surveys for species presence/absence are done for threatened, endangered, and proposed species, use established survey protocols, where such protocols exist* • *S47 – Riparian Conservation Area 5-Step Screening Process* • *S60 – Cultural and Historic – applies same protection and consideration to sites not yet evaluate for National Register as to those found eligible*	*Yes*	• *S9/S10 - The Project would not alter the definition of High SIO for the Reservoir, and would be consistent with the SIO of the Forest Plan, as discussed in Section C.11.2 (Visual Resources).* • *S11/S12 – Species guidance documents were used in preparing Biological Evaluations/Assessments. Mitigation is captured in SPC's for a variety of species, as discussed in Section C.3 (Biological Resources).* • *S14/S15 – Any snags that are not a safety threat would be retained. Downed logs would be retained to the extent feasible.* • *S18 - An evaluation of impacts to nesting birds and raptors was conducted in Section C.3 (Biological Resources). To ensure that the Project is consistent with the Forest's management activities, SPCs have been incorporated to avoid impacts to nesting birds.* • *S24 – Project purpose and need is to provide long term habitat protection for arroyo toad by installing a grade control structure.* • *S31 – Grade control structure will avoid impacts by serving as a boundary and barrier to areas occupied by arroyo toad.* • *S32 - The Project would comply with all applicable standards and protocols when conducting surveys for listed plants and wildlife.* • *S47 – RCA Screening Process has been applied. See Biology Section C.3.5.4 for analysis of habitat impacts including riparian areas.* • *S60 – Protection of any non-evaluated sites as eligible for the National Register is provided as applicable. See Section C.4.4 (Cultural Resources).*

Table C.9-1. Consistency with Applicable Recreation and Land Use Plans and Policies

Plan/Policy	Consistency	Explanation
• *S61 – Cultural and Historic - human remains that are not under the jurisdiction of the County Coroner shall remain undisturbed unless there is an urgent reason for their disinterment.*		• *S61 - Procedures noted in Mitigation Measure C-2 provide for the appropriate treatment in the event of an accidental discovery of human remains during Project construction. See Section C.4.4 (Cultural Resources).*
County of Los Angeles General Plan Land Use Element (November 1980)		
Policy 5: Where appropriate, promote more intensive use of industrial sites, especially in areas requiring revitalization.	Yes	Excavated sediment would be disposed at exhausted quarries located within the City of Palmdale. Prior to sediment storage at PWD-owned property on 47th Street, PWD would seek a CUP from the County to be consistent with local zoning. SPC LAND-1 (Obtain Necessary Conditional Use Permits) has been incorporated into the Project to ensure compliance with local zoning requirements (see Appendix A).
Policy 6: Encourage the recycling of abandoned mineral extraction sites to recreational, industrial or other productive use.	Yes	PWD will seek to recycle excavated sediment as feasible for use on District and other municipal projects. Sediment that cannot be recycled would be disposed at exhausted quarries located within the City of Palmdale.
Policy 8: Protect the character of residential neighborhoods by preventing the intrusion of incompatible uses that would cause environmental degradation such as excessive noise, noxious fumes, glare, shadowing, and traffic.	Yes	SPCs and mitigation measures have been incorporated to minimize trucking and sediment disposal impacts to nearby residences. See Section C.2 (Air Quality and Climate Change), Section C.8 (Noise), Section C.10 (Transportation and Traffic), and Section C.11 (Visual Resources).
Policy 11: Promote planned industrial development in order to avoid land use conflicts with neighboring activities.	Yes	Excavated sediment would be disposed at exhausted quarries located within the City of Palmdale. Prior to sediment storage at PWD-owned property on 47th Street, PWD would seek a CUP from the County to be consistent with local zoning. SPC LAND-1 (Obtain Necessary Conditional Use Permits) has been incorporated into the Project to ensure compliance with local zoning requirements (see Appendix A).
County of Los Angeles Antelope Valley Areawide General Plan (December 1986)		
Policy 32: Encourage recycling and revitalization of deteriorating urban areas by pursuing appropriate demolition, rebuilding, and/or rehabilitation.	Yes	PWD will seek to recycle excavated sediment as feasible for use on District and other municipal projects. Sediment that cannot be recycled would be disposed at exhausted quarries located within the City of Palmdale.
Policy 33: Encourage maintenance, conservation, and rehabilitation to prevent community deterioration.	Yes	Excavated sediment would be disposed at exhausted quarries located within the City of Palmdale. Prior to sediment storage at PWD-owned property on 47th Street, PWD would seek a CUP from the County to be consistent with local zoning. SPC LAND-1 (Obtain Necessary Conditional Use Permits) has been incorporated into the Project to ensure compliance with local zoning requirements (see Appendix A).
Policy 62: Mitigate where possible undesirable impacts of adjacent land uses (i.e., noise interruption, visual intrusion, and airborne emissions) through utilization of appropriate buffers, building codes and standards.	Yes	SPCs and mitigation measures have been incorporated to minimize trucking and sediment disposal impacts to nearby residences. See Section C.2 (Air Quality and Climate Change), Section C.8 (Noise), Section C.10 (Transportation and Traffic), and Section C.11 (Visual Resources).
Policy 155: Encourage continued cooperation among federal, state and local agencies in multiple use management of public lands — specifically recognizing recreation as a desirable use.	Yes	PWD is working jointly with the Forest Service to restore the flood control and water storage capacity of the existing Reservoir. There would be no impact to recreation areas outside of the Reservoir.

Table C.9-1. Consistency with Applicable Recreation and Land Use Plans and Policies

Plan/Policy	Consistency	Explanation
City of Palmdale General Plan Land Use Element (January 1993)		
Policy L5.2.1: Discourage encroachment of incompatible uses into or adjacent to designated industrial land, when it can be shown that such uses may ultimately impede development of industrial uses, and that such uses may be established elsewhere in the Planning Area.	Yes	Excavated sediment would be disposed at exhausted quarries within the City of Palmdale that are zoned for quarry and reclamation use. Quarry operators would obtain a new or modified CUP from the City to be consistent with local zoning. SPC LAND-1 (Obtain Necessary Conditional Use Permits) has been incorporated into the Project to ensure compliance with local zoning requirements (see Appendix A).
Policy L5.2.2: Assure compatibility of industrial development with adjacent uses: ▪ Adopt development standards to ensure industrial uses are compatible with adjacent uses and with aesthetic views from adjacent rights-or-way, including but not limited to standards for screening of outdoor storage, locations of loading and refuse disposal areas, height, bulk, impervious surface area, architectural enhancement, landscaping, and other appropriate measures.	Yes	Prior to sediment disposal, PWD and/or quarry operator would seek any required CUPs to be consistent with local zoning. SPC LAND-1 (Obtain Necessary Conditional Use Permits) has been incorporated into the Project to ensure compliance with local zoning requirements (see Appendix A). SPCs and mitigation measures have also been incorporated to minimize trucking and sediment disposal impacts to nearby residences. See Section C.2 (Air Quality and Climate Change), Section C.8 (Noise), Section C.10 (Transportation and Traffic), and Section C.11 (Visual Resources).
Policy L5.2.7: Adopt performance standards for noise, odors, emissions, vibrations glare, radiation, and other potential impacts of industrial development.	Yes	SPCs and mitigation measures have been incorporated to minimize trucking and sediment disposal impacts to nearby residences. See Section C.2 (Air Quality and Climate Change), Section C.8 (Noise), Section C.10 (Transportation and Traffic), and Section C.11 (Visual Resources).
Policy L7.1.6: Within the Mineral Resource Extraction Zone, ensure that future mining activities over which the City has discretionary authority are compatible with neighboring residential uses: ▪ Ancillary uses allowed on the site should be normally associated with extraction and/or processing of decomposed granite. Uses that are not directly associated (e.g., storage of vehicles/equipment not related to on-site materials extraction) are not appropriate. ▪ Ensure that measures to control noise, dust, and erosion/sedimentation are applied to on-going mining activities. ▪ Require screening from public view all equipment, stockpiles, or wastepiles. ▪ Evaluate truck access to and from the site in order to reduce impacts generated by truck traffic to nearby residents.	Yes	Prior to sediment disposal, PWD and/or quarry operator would seek any required CUPs to be consistent with local zoning. SPC LAND-1 (Obtain Necessary Conditional Use Permits) has been incorporated into the Project to ensure compliance with local zoning requirements (see Appendix A). SPCs and mitigation measures have also been incorporated to minimize trucking and sediment disposal impacts to nearby residences. See Section C.2 (Air Quality and Climate Change), Section and Section C.11 (Visual Resources).

Sources: City of Palmdale, 1993; County of Los Angeles, 1986, 1980; USDA Forest Service 2005a, 2005b, 2005c.

C.9.3 Issues Identified During Scoping

Table C.9-2 below provides a list of recreation and land use issues raised during the public scoping period for the EIS/EIR [see Appendix E (Summary of Scoping Process)]. Issues are listed by agency or members of the public providing comment. The table also includes a brief discussion of the applicability of each issue to the environmental analysis and where that issue is addressed in the EIS/EIR.

Table C.9-2. Scoping Issues Relevant to Recreation and Land Use

Comment	Consideration in the EIS/EIR
Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board	
The Draft EIS/EIR should evaluate and consider changes in reservoir management as a control measure for methylmercury production.	The Project addresses the increased sedimentation of the Reservoir, and would restore the Reservoir to its 1992 water storage and flood control capacity. Future changes in Reservoir management that are for other purposes are outside of the scope of this EIS/EIR. For a discussion of Project impacts related to water quality, please see Section C.12.
The Draft EIS/EIR should evaluate and consider reducing concentrations of inorganic mercury in reservoir sediment through remediation of historic gold and mercury mines upstream of reservoirs.	The Forest Service is not aware of any abandoned mines that have been identified as sources of mercury. Remediation of historic mines is not within the scope of this EIS/EIR. For a discussion of Project impacts related to water quality, please see Section C.12.
City of Palmdale	
The project description indicated that the sediment will be transported off-site to properties owned by the Palmdale Water District or locations accepting sediment for placement and spreading. A Temporary Use Permit for Stockpiling will be required for this activity. No undisturbed land can be used to store/stockpile of sediment, additionally any stockpiling cannot exceed three (3) feet in height of material.	Section C.9.2 discusses the need for obtaining a conditional use permit prior to the use of proposed sediment storage or disposal sites in the City of Palmdale or unincorporated Los Angeles County. SPC LAND-1 (Obtain Necessary Conditional Use Permits) has been incorporated into the Project to ensure compliance with local zoning requirements (see Appendix A).
An alternative consisting of long-term year-round closure of the Reservoir, as included within the NOP, does not specify where the sediment will be transported in order to maintain Reservoir storage capacity. The method of disposal of sediment must be discussed as part of any such alternative.	The preliminary alternatives that were considered during the scoping process have been revised; see Section B.4.6 (Description of Alternatives Eliminated from Further Consideration). The revised Alternative 1 would not require year-round closure of the Reservoir. Section B.4.5.1 (Reduced Sediment Removal Intensity Alternative [Alternative 1]) provides a full description of proposed sediment removal and disposal activities. Truck transport routes and proposed sediment storage and disposal sites under Alternative 1 are identical to the proposed action.
Regarding the disposal of sediment within existing quarries, the City wishes to note that the existing mining operations are operating under a Conditional Use Permit. Any disposal or infill of any material within the open pits will require that the selected mining operation, or operations, submit for a major modification to their CUP or that a new Conditional Use Permit application be submitted. Additionally, the Office of Mine and Reclamation will be notified of the major modification to the approved Reclamation Plan(s). The NOP also identifies the potential for an alternative utilizing \ slurry pipelines to transport the sediment to the selected quarry pit or pits. The City would like to comment that an encroachment permit will also be required for any work to be done in the public right-of-way.	The preliminary alternatives that were considered during the scoping process have been revised, with some initial alternatives (e.g., Slurry Excavation Alternative) eliminated due to issues of feasibility or fundamental disadvantages. See Section B.4.6 (Description of Alternatives Eliminated from Further Consideration) for a discussion of these alternatives. Regarding use of sediment disposal sites in the City of Palmdale, PWD would obtain a conditional use permit from the City prior to the start of Project activities to ensure compliance with local zoning requirements. SPC LAND-1 (Obtain Necessary Conditional Use Permits) has been incorporated into the Project to ensure compliance with local zoning requirements (see Appendix A).

C.9.4 Environmental Consequences

Significance Criteria. The following significance criteria for Recreation and Land Use were derived from previous environmental impact assessments for similar projects, agency thresholds, and from the CEQA Guidelines (Appendix G, Environmental Checklist Form, Section IX). Impacts of the Project or alternatives would be considered significant and would require mitigation if they:

- Criterion LU1: Conflict with applicable adopted local, State, or federal land use or recreation plans, goals, policies, or regulations.

- Criterion LU2: Preclude a permitted use on nearby property or create a disturbance that would diminish the function of a particular land use.
- Criterion LU3: Contribute to the long-term loss or degradation of the recreational value of an established, designated, or planned recreational use area.

Impact Assessment Methodology. The impact analysis for Recreation and Land Use begins with a survey of existing land uses and recreational resources within the Project area through the use of site visits, aerial maps, discussions with jurisdictional agencies (i.e., Palmdale Water District, Forest Service, City of Palmdale, and County of Los Angeles), and review of applicable planning and policy documents. These baseline conditions for the Project area are described in Sections C.9.1 (Affected Environment) and C.9.2 (Regulatory Framework).

C.9.4.1 Proposed Action/Project

Direct and Indirect Effects Analysis

Conflict with applicable adopted local, State or federal land use or recreation plans, goals, policies, or regulations (Criterion LU1)

The implementation of the Project is consistent with the Land Use Zones, Strategies, and Desired Conditions in the 2005 Forest Service's Land Management Plan. The Project complies with all applicable Forest Plan Standards listed in Table C.9-1. As described in Section C.9.2, the Project is consistent with Forest Plan program strategies for Special Use Administration, Watershed Function, and Air Quality, and will help accomplish the Desired Conditions for Natural Areas in an Urban Context by using and restoring an existing facility instead of constructing a new one.

As a State water agency, PWD has pre-emptive jurisdiction over local plans, policies, and regulations. However, the Project is anticipated to comply with the plans and policies of the City of Palmdale and the County of Los Angeles. Appendix A describes the SPCs that would limit noise and emissions from construction equipment and dump trucks, and Sections C.2 (Air Quality and Climate Change) and C.8 (Noise) include additional mitigation measures to ensure that Project-related noise and emissions are within acceptable levels to local jurisdictions.

The Project would also comply with local zoning requirements regarding sediment disposal. Prior to any movement of excavated sediment, PWD would either: (1) work with the County of Los Angeles to obtain a CUP for sediment storage at the property on 47th Street East; and/or (2) coordinate with participating quarry operators in the City of Palmdale to ensure that sediment disposal occurs only at sites that have been granted a new CUP or a modification to an existing CUP. This commitment to comply with local zoning requirements at the sediment storage and disposal sites has been incorporated into the Project as SPC LAND-1 (Obtain Necessary Conditional Use Permits). See Appendix A for the full text of the Project's SPCs.

Given that the Project is subject to the discretionary review and approval of the Forest Service, and that PWD is coordinating with the County of Los Angeles and the City of Palmdale to meet their permitting and zoning requirements, the Project would be consistent with applicable plans, policies, and regulations.

Preclude a permitted use on nearby property or create a disturbance that would diminish the function of a particular land use (Criterion LU2)

PWD is working jointly with the Forest Service to restore the flood control and water storage capacity of the Reservoir. These proposed restoration activities would neither expand existing facilities nor convert

NFS lands outside of the Study Area. The existing designation and use of NFS lands would not be affected by the Project.

Outside of NFS lands, no existing recreation facilities, parks, or trails were identified along the proposed truck routes that would be disrupted by sediment hauling activities. The truck routes would utilize existing roadways that would not affect adjacent trail facilities or trail use in Los Angeles County or City of Palmdale.

As discussed in Section C.9.1.1, the Reservoir and surrounding area is currently closed to physical entry. However, this closure is not permanent and the Forest Service may decide to allow recreational use of the Reservoir at any time during the life of the Project. The Forest Plan specifies that the primary recreational facilities and uses be retained or studied on a site-specific basis for retention. Recreational opportunities are currently very limited, but may be adversely affected if the Project were to reduce future recreational opportunities and/or conflict with the ability of the Forest Service to implement the Forest Plan.

If the Reservoir were to be re-opened to public use, Project activities (i.e., construction and excavation) would continue to temporarily preclude the recreational use of the Reservoir and surrounding area (Impact L-1). Sediment storage and disposal may also preclude future land use at the proposed disposal sites (Impact L-2). The following discussion describes these potential impacts and the mitigation measures that are proposed to minimize these impacts to the degree feasible.

Impact L-1: Project construction and excavation would preclude or disturb existing recreational resources.

Grade Control Structure

Construction of the grade control structure and the initial excavation and removal of sediment from the Reservoir bottom at the Project site would begin in July 2017 and extend until seasonal water refill of the Reservoir (between mid-November to January). Historically the Reservoir has provided recreational opportunities, primarily in the form of water-based recreation (i.e., boating and fishing). However, this recreational resource has been affected by the current drought, which has caused PWD to virtually empty the Reservoir as early as April, leaving no “minimum pool” for water-based recreation. Other forms of recreation such as OHV use have been intermittently allowed by the Forest Service within the Reservoir.

As discussed in Section C.9.1, the Reservoir is currently closed to public access to protect public health and safety. Construction of the grade control structure would require PWD to lower the Reservoir water level in July to allow for construction at Rocky Point, and the Reservoir would be closed to the public during this time to ensure safety. However, construction of the grade control structure is not expected to result in a substantial effect on recreation use, because it would occur during 2017 when the potential for recreational use is expected to continue to be very low. In addition, the Reservoir may continue to be closed to the public during that time. Although the Reservoir and surrounding area are currently closed to public use, this closure may be lifted by the Forest Service at any time during the life of the Project. Mitigation Measure L-1a (Coordinate Project scheduling and maintenance activities with Forest Service Authorized Officer) is recommended to ensure that all Project-related activities are coordinated with the Forest Service.

Initial Annual Sediment Removal- Restore to 1992 Design Capacity

Once the grade control structure is complete, initial sediment removal (lasting 7 to 12 years) would only occur annually during a timeframe when PWD is permitted to remove water from the Reservoir for beneficial use (all sediment removal activities would be scheduled from Labor Day to mid-November to

January). The Reservoir would be closed to the public during this time to ensure safety. Under current operating conditions, during this timeframe, PWD is permitted to obtain water from the Reservoir as necessary for a potable water source. Therefore, water-based recreational activities are not considered available during this period and would not be affected. However, the temporary closure of the Reservoir during sediment removal would preclude OHV use of the Reservoir floor when it may otherwise be available. Mitigation Measure L-1a (Coordinate Project scheduling and maintenance activities with Forest Service Authorized Officer) is recommended to ensure that all Project-related activities are coordinated with the Forest Service. Future recreational use and opportunities at the developed recreation sites would also be impacted by temporary closure of the Reservoir for initial sediment removal. Mitigation Measure L-1b (Provide Compensation to Forest Service for Lost Recreational Opportunity) is recommended to ensure this impact is reduced.

Ongoing Annual Sediment Removal – Operation and Maintenance

After initial sediment removal has occurred and the Reservoir is restored to 1992 design storage capacity, the potential for future water-based recreational opportunities would be limited by maintaining the increased storage capacity of the Reservoir, thereby maintaining the increase in the amount of water necessary to fill the Reservoir to minimum pool. Filling the Reservoir to minimum pool would require approximately ten days to two weeks longer than under current conditions (due to increased capacity); however, this would typically occur between January and March when seasonal rain and snowmelt occurs and refills the Reservoir to minimum pool depths. There would be no effect on the typical water-based recreation season of 95 days (June until Labor Day); however, there may one or two years over the life of the Project where the Reservoir would not reach minimum pool. Mitigation Measure L-1b (Provide Compensation to Forest Service for Lost Recreational Opportunity) would minimize this impact by compensating for any lost recreational opportunity. As the Reservoir is not currently listed for recreational fish stocking by CDFW, the removal of non-native fish would eliminate what remains of a historic recreational fishery. However, no historical recreational use data specific to fishing at the Reservoir is available that would allow quantification of this impact.

During the ongoing sediment removal phase of the Project (operation and maintenance), sediment removal would occur for the life of the Reservoir to maintain its storage capacity. These operation and maintenance activities would occur in a manner identical to that described above for initial sediment removal (between Labor Day to mid-November to January).

In order to ensure that sediment removal and grading of the Reservoir bottom would occur in a manner that could allow the Reservoir to continue as a feasible OHV area, SPC LAND-2 (Design Grading to Accommodate OHV Access) would be included as part of the Project. As described in Appendix A, SPC LAND-2 would require the Project grading plan to consider future safety and access for OHVs. To further reduce recreational impacts to the extent feasible, Mitigation Measure L-1a (Coordinate Project scheduling and maintenance activities with Forest Service Authorized Officer) is recommended to ensure that all Project-related activities are coordinated with the Forest Service. Future long-term recreational use and opportunities at the developed recreation sites would be impacted by temporary closure of the Reservoir for ongoing sediment removal. Mitigation Measure L-1b (Provide Compensation to Forest Service for Lost Recreational Opportunity) is recommended to ensure this impact is reduced.

Mitigation for Impact L-1

L-1a **Coordinate Project scheduling and maintenance activities with Forest Service Authorized Officer**. PWD shall develop the Project construction schedule and coordinate construction with the Forest Service's Authorized Officer. Coordination efforts shall ensure the following occurs unless otherwise approved by the Forest Service's Authorized Officer:

- Construction and maintenance activities are scheduled to avoid heavy recreational use periods (including major holidays) as determined by the Forest Service's Authorized Officer;
- Staging areas for Project activities are located so as to minimize the need to temporarily close developed recreation facilities;
- Timetables for the required period of use will attempt to limit the need for and duration of temporary closures to the greatest extent feasible; and
- The Forest Service and PWD will meet annually prior to Labor Day to discuss these measures and reach consensus. The Forest Service retains final discretion over any temporary closures.

L-1b **Provide Compensation to Forest Service for Lost Recreational Opportunity.** The recreational impacts of the Project during construction could vary widely in any given year. PWD and the Forest Service agree as part of an annual meeting to assess the likely duration of closures and jointly determine the number of days of lost recreation opportunities directly attributable to the Project during the construction time period. Any areas that remain closed to recreation for other factors not associated with the construction of the Project will not be considered. PWD shall compensate the Forest Service based on long term historical records of revenue generated per day kept prior to start of construction of the Project, and also an agreed upon value of public recreation, as determined by literature or studies. Compensation may be any form allowable under current agreement authorities, including cash, equipment, supplies, or in-kind labor. Contributions may be made to a third party, or applied off-site if agreed to by the parties. The goal is for PWD and the Forest Service to build a partnership that provides and enhances recreation fairly and commensurate with Project impacts.

SPC Applicable to Impact L-1

SPC LAND-2 (Design Grading to Accommodate OHV Access)

CEQA Significance Conclusion

After the initial construction and excavation activities proposed throughout the summer and fall of the Project's first year (2017), the proposed action would not preclude recreational use of the Reservoir during the peak summer months until after Labor Day, assuming that the Reservoir is opened for public use during the life of the Project. The implementation of Mitigation Measure L-1a would ensure that ongoing annual excavation and sediment removal is scheduled to avoid closure of the Reservoir during the peak recreational period. The implementation of Mitigation Measure L-1b ensures the Forest Service is compensated for lost recreational opportunity at the Reservoir. The incorporation of SPC LAND-2 would also ensure that grading activities would not permanently preclude OHV use within the Reservoir. With the implementation of these measures, potentially significant recreation impacts would be reduced to a less than significant level (Class II).

Impact L-2: Sediment transport and disposal would preclude or disturb existing uses along the truck route and disposal sites.

As proposed, the Project would transport excavated sediment along existing roadways and temporarily store and/or dispose of sediment at one of two sites. The PWD-owned site on 47th Street East is undeveloped, although existing and possibly future residential development borders the property to the east and west. Existing residences are also adjacent to the sand and gravel quarries in the City of Palmdale along Avenue T. The numerous dump truck trips (maximum of 480 per day) that would be required during the first seven to 12 years of sediment removal, followed by the truck trips during operation and maintenance of the Reservoir, would create nuisance impacts to nearby residences. Residents along the truck routes or disposal sites would be disturbed by the increased truck traffic along roadways, as well as by the noise and emissions from the trucks.

SPCs Applicable to Impact L-2

SPC AQ-1 (Limit Engine Idling)

SPC AQ-2 (Fugitive Dust Controls)

SPC AQ- (Off-Road Engine Specifications)

SPC AQ-4 (On-Road Engine Specifications)

SPC AQ-5 (Reduce Off-Road Vehicle Speeds)

SPC NOI-1 (Prepare a Construction Noise Complaint and Vibration Plan)

SPC NOI-2 (PWD Site Buffer Requirements)

CEQA Significance Conclusion

Transport of sediment during the initial excavation period, as well as during subsequent operation and maintenance phases, would create nuisance impacts that would be significant and unavoidable. SPCs AQ-1 through AQ-5, NOI-1, and NOI-2 would minimize the disturbance to nearby residences to the degree feasible. However, given the length of time that the disturbance would occur (i.e., initial activities over seven to 12 years plus continued annual excavation), and the proximity of existing residences to the truck routes and sediment storage/disposal sites, the impacts to residential land uses cannot be mitigated to a level that is less than significant (Class I).

Contribute to the long-term loss or degradation of the recreational value of an established, designated, or planned recreational use area (Criterion LU3)

As described in Section C.9.1 (Affected Environment), the Project would restore the existing Reservoir to its 1992 design, which would increase the capacity of the Reservoir. By extending the life of the Reservoir as a functional waterbody, the Project would enhance water-based recreational opportunities offered at the Reservoir. The Project would not contribute to the long-term loss or degradation of recreational resources within the Study Area.

C.9.4.2 Alternative 1: Reduced Sediment Removal Intensity

Direct and Indirect Effects Analysis

Conflict with applicable adopted local, State or federal land use or recreation plans, goals, policies, or regulations (Criterion LU1)

Alternative 1 differs from the Project primarily in regards to the schedule for construction and excavation activities. The components of the alternative, including the location of proposed grade control construction, sediment excavation, and staging areas; dump truck routes; and the proposed sediment storage and disposal sites would be identical to the Project. Alternative 1 would also incorporate SPC LAND-1 (Obtain Necessary Conditional Use Permits), which would ensure that this alternative would comply with local zoning requirements (see Appendix A). Therefore, Alternative 1 would be the same as the Project in that it would comply with and support the goals of the 2005 Forest Service's Land Management Plan, and would meet the permitting and zoning requirements of the City of Palmdale and the County of Los Angeles. Alternative 1 would be consistent with applicable plans, policies, and regulations.

Preclude a permitted use on nearby property or create a disturbance that would diminish the function of a particular land use (Criterion LU2)

Impact L-1: Project construction and excavation would preclude or disturb existing recreational resources.

Alternative 1 would be identical to the Project in that it would not alter the designation or use of NFS lands. However, this alternative would reduce the weekly construction schedule to five days per week (instead of six days per week under the Project), and would begin the annual excavation activities for initial sediment removal on July 1st instead of after Labor Day. The extended schedule for proposed construction and excavation activities would preclude water-based recreational use of the Reservoir, assuming that the Reservoir is opened to the public during the life of the Project and PWD does not lower the Reservoir water level during the summer months (as it is permitted to do during drought years). Impacts to recreational resources at the Reservoir would be increased (i.e., impacting water-based recreational use) and would be more prolonged than under the proposed Project, given that the closure of recreational facilities under Alternative 1 would occur during the heaviest use periods. Implementation of the following measures and commitments would reduce impacts to the extent feasible: Mitigation Measure L-1a would ensure that all Project-related activities are coordinated with the Forest Service. Mitigation Measure L-1b would ensure the Forest Service is compensated for lost recreational opportunity at the Reservoir. The incorporation of SPC LAND-2 would ensure that grading activities would not permanently preclude OHV use within the Reservoir.

Mitigation for Impact L-1

L-1a (Coordinate Project scheduling and maintenance activities with Forest Service Authorized Officer)

L-1b (Provide Compensation to Forest Service for Lost Recreational Opportunity)

SPC Applicable to Impact L-1

SPC LAND-2 (Design Grading to Accommodate OHV Access)

CEQA Significance Conclusion

Compared with the Project, Alternative 1 would double the number of years that the Reservoir would be closed to the public as a result of construction and excavation activities. Assuming that the Forest Service re-opens the Reservoir to future public access, recreational use of the Reservoir during the peak summer period would continue to be precluded for a minimum of 13 years. The Forest Service and PWD would continue to annually review the construction schedule and assess future recreation opportunities (see Mitigation Measure L-1a), and the Forest Service would be compensated for lost recreational opportunity (see Mitigation Measure L-1b). However, due to the extended closure, impacts to this popular recreational resource would be significant and unavoidable (Class I).

Impact L-2: Sediment transport and disposal would preclude or disturb existing uses along the truck route and disposal sites.

The dump truck routes and the proposed sediment storage and disposal sites for Alternative 1 would be identical to the Project. However, this alternative includes a reduced weekly construction schedule, which would reduce air quality emissions and the number of daily truck trips. Nuisance impacts to residences adjacent to these sites and truck routes would be reduced in intensity (e.g., less daily truck traffic, reduced daily air quality emissions) in comparison to the Project. The total number of years over which disturbance would occur to residential uses in the Project area would double under Alternative 1. SPCs AQ-1 through AQ-5, NOI-1, and NOI-2 would be incorporated into Alternative 1 and would minimize adverse effects on nearby residents to the degree feasible.

SPCs Applicable to Impact L-2

SPC AQ-1 (Limit Engine Idling)

SPC AQ-2 (Fugitive Dust Controls)

SPC AQ-3 (Off-Road Engine Specifications)

SPC AQ-4 (On-Road Engine Specifications)

SPC AQ-5 (Reduce Off-Road Vehicle Speeds)

SPC NOI-1 (Prepare a Construction Noise Complaint and Vibration Plan)

SPC NOI-2 (PWD Site Buffer Requirements)

CEQA Significance Conclusion

Similar to the Project, transport of sediment during the initial excavation period, as well as during subsequent operation and maintenance phases, would create nuisance impacts that would be significant and unavoidable under Alternative 1. A reduced construction schedule as well as proposed SPCs AQ-1 through AQ-5, NOI-1, and NOI-2 would lessen the daily disturbance to nearby residences in comparison to the Project. However, given the length of time that disturbance would occur (i.e., initial activities over 13 years plus continued annual excavation), and the proximity of existing residences to the truck routes and sediment storage/disposal sites, the impacts to residential land uses cannot be mitigated to a level that is less than significant (Class I).

Contribute to the long-term loss or degradation of the recreational value of an established, designated, or planned recreational use area (Criterion LU3)

Alternative 1 would be identical to the Project in that it would restore the existing Reservoir to its 1992 design capacity. By extending the life of the Reservoir as a functional waterbody, this alternative would enhance water-based recreational opportunities offered at the Reservoir. Alternative 1 would not contribute to the long-term loss or degradation of recreational resources within the Study Area.

C.9.4.3 Alternative 2: No Action/No Project Alternative

Direct and Indirect Effects Analysis

Under Alternative 2, the Reservoir would continue to accumulate sediment until it no longer functioned as a viable water storage facility. Littlerock Dam currently operates under an ANF Special Use Permit as a designated potable water source, and the inability of the Reservoir to operate as a storage facility would require the demolition of the Dam per the conditions identified in the Special Use Permit. As the future management and possible removal of the Dam and the Reservoir would be determined by the review authority of the Forest Service and DWR, Alternative 2 would not conflict with applicable State or federal plans, policies, or regulations. Removal of the Dam would also require the removal of approximately 2.8 million cubic yards of sediment and dam concrete, which would be transported and disposed of in a manner that was consistent with local planning requirements. Alternative 2 would be consistent with applicable plans, policies, and regulations.

Under Alternative 2, there would be no construction of a grade control structure at the Reservoir and management of the Reservoir would not include excavation of sediment. Alternative 2 would not create short-term impacts to a recreational resource, and Impact L-1 (Project construction and excavation would preclude or disturb existing recreational resources) would not occur under this alternative. The potential for Alternative 2 to permanently preclude recreational use of the Reservoir is discussed below under Impact L-3.

In the event that continued sedimentation of the Reservoir under Alternative 2 would compromise the long-term integrity of the Dam, future No Action/No Project activities may include demolishing the Dam and removing approximately 2.8 million cubic yards of sediment and dam concrete. Given that the amount of sediment to be removed under Alternative 2 is more than twice the volume as the Project, the number of dump truck trips and the length of the excavation schedule would be of a greater intensity. Alternative 2 would create a severe disturbance to residences along the truck routes and near the disposal sites (Impact L-2).

Impact L-3: Increased sedimentation of the Reservoir would contribute to the long-term degradation of a recreational resource.

Neither the proposed Project nor Alternative 1 would contribute to the long-term loss or degradation of the recreational value of Littlerock Reservoir (Criterion LU3). However, continued sediment accumulation under Alternative 2 would result in the annual reduction of Reservoir capacity, which would limit the future water-based recreational opportunities within the Study Area. In the event that DWR determined that the Reservoir no longer functioned as a viable water storage facility, the Dam could be demolished and the Reservoir would be permanently closed. The loss of this recreational resource would be irreversible.

CEQA Significance Conclusion

Future removal of the Dam, which may be required under Alternative 2, would involve the excavation and transport of more than twice the volume of sediment as the Project. Such activities would create disturbances to residences along the dump truck routes and disposal sites that would be significant and unavoidable (Class I). Eventual demolition of the Dam, which may occur per the authority of the DWR, would create a significant and irreversible impact (Class I) from the loss of this recreational resource.

C.9.5 Impact Summary

Table C.9-3 summarizes the direct and indirect environmental impacts of the Project and the alternatives on recreation and land use. Refer to Section C.9.4 for the entire environmental analysis and the full text of recommended mitigation.

Table C.9-3. Summary of Impacts and Mitigation Measures – Recreation and Land Use

Impact	Impact Significance				Mitigation Measures/SPC
	Proposed Action	Alt. 1	Alt. 2: No Action	NFS Lands[1]	
L-1: Project construction and excavation would preclude or disturb existing recreational resources.	Class II	Class I	NA	Yes	Mitigation Measure L-1a: Coordinate Project scheduling and maintenance activities with Forest Service Authorized Officer Mitigation Measure L-1b: Provide Compensation to Forest Service for Lost Recreational Opportunity SPC LAND-2 (Design Grading to Accommodate OHV Access)
L-2: Sediment transport and disposal would preclude or disturb existing uses along the truck route and disposal sites.	Class I	Class I	Class I	No	SPC AQ-1 (Limit Engine Idling) SPC AQ-2 (Fugitive Dust Controls) SPC AQ-3 (Off-Road Engine Specifications) SPC AQ-4 (On-Road Engine Specifications) SPC AQ-5 (Reduce Off-Road Vehicle Speeds) SPC NOI-1 (Prepare a Construction Noise Complaint and Vibration Plan) SPC NOI-2 (PWD Site Buffer Requirements)
L-3: Increased sedimentation of the Reservoir would contribute to the long-term degradation of a recreational resource.	NA	NA	Class I	Yes	None

Notes:
1 - Indicates whether this impact is applicable to National Forest System lands.
NA = Not Applicable